

under the altar from which men would kindle the wood to make onlookers believe the fire was supernaturally kindled. Elijah's method would guard against all possibilities of such deception.

34 This would make all trickery impossible, and while Elijah had no thought of deception, the idolaters might charge him with the same tricks with which they were guilty. This water came from a perennial spring not far away.

35 Elijah not only put water on the sacrifice but filled the trench about the altar. He had perfect confidence that God would answer him, and that the test would be beyond dispute.

36 The divinely appointed time for the offering would be the ninth hour, 3 P. M. The prophet's prayer was that God would make himself known by fire. See v. 24. This was not Elijah's own planning, it was done at the direction of his God, and he had a right therefore to plead for answer to his prayer.

37 He did not pray that his own word might be made good or that he, the prophet, might be honored, but that God might be glorified, and his name honored. The people had turned away from the true God, and were worshipping idols. The wonderful manifestation of God in the fire would be turned away from Baal-worship to the worship of the true God.

38 The sky was clear, and the people could plainly see the fire like lightning from the heavens. There could be no mistake about it, everybody would be convinced that the fire came from God in answer to Elijah's prayer. The work of the fire was complete, as it ate up the stones, wood and dust, and dried up all the water.

39 The scene was one of awful grandeur. The people saw with their own eyes and knew that it was not a deception. The effect upon the people was very great. Falling upon their faces they accepted the result of the test as final, and acknowledged that Elijah's God was the only true God.

40 Of these prophets there were 450. The slaying of them must not be considered an act of cruelty. They were traitors, and their destruction was necessary to save the nation.

#### The Lesson Applied

1. *Repaired the Altar.*—That is what Elijah did, and that is what needs to be done in a good many other places. Once there had been an altar there, but it was there no longer. The same may be said of many homes and human hearts. Once there was an altar in your home. The voice of prayer and praise ascended from that home to the God of heaven, but that altar is there no more, it has been broken down. Once there was an altar in your secret life. You were taught at your mother's knees to kneel in prayer and morning and evening commit yourself to God, and all the way through childhood and youth that altar continued. But now it is broken down, and God no longer

hears the sweet voice of prayer and praise. So in many a human heart where once the fires of love and devotion burnt continually, may be found broken altars and ruined temples. When Elijah began his reform the first thing he did on Carmel was to set up and repair the broken down altar, and this is the one great need in our homes and lives. The old altars need to be set up and then blessings will come again as they did of old.

2. *The Glory of God.*—The reason Elijah succeeded on that day was that he was doing all to the honor and glory of God. His one object was, not that the people might know that there was a prophet in Israel, but that there was a God in Israel. As long as people seek their own honor they will not accomplish very much for the Lord. This is the fatal mistake of many ministers and teachers and other Christian workers. They are holding themselves up to the people instead of holding up Christ. Whatever Christian work you may be engaged in you must be willing to lose yourself in it that you may make Christ known. Hold up Christ to the people, the people want to see and know him, not you. About the last thing we are ready to give up is self, but until that is done the Lord can not use us for any great purpose.

3. *The Great Test.*—That was a great test on Mount Carmel and it resulted in a great victory for Jehovah as it always does. That test is being continually repeated. For 1800 years Christianity has been challenging all the false religions of the world and it has never once failed and never will. We have the most positive evidence of the divine life and power of Christianity by what it has done for the world. Everywhere we see the fruits of our holy religion. Christianity with its simple story of love has entered heathen lands and there the test has been applied, its work has been placed side by side with that of pagan religions and with great triumph we can say, "The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God." The question for each one of us to decide is, "Are we on the side of God?"

#### To Make You Think

1. How long did the famine continue?
2. Who was the cause of the famine and what good was it to accomplish?
3. Who proposed the test on Mount Carmel?
4. By what test were the people to know who was the true God?
5. What decision did Elijah call on the people to make?
6. What reasons had the people for serving Baal?
7. What reasons can you give as to why we should serve God?
8. Between what two opinions do we have to make a choice?
9. What was the result of the test on Mount Carmel?
10. Is the religion of Christ continually on trial?
11. In what way does it show its superiority over all other religions?
12. Why did Elijah have the 450 prophets slain?
13. Was it right?
14. On what ground do you justify the act?
15. After the test what prayer did Elijah offer?
16. In what way did the answer come?

#### Lesson Points

- 1 God always has his man ready.
- 2 The power of prayer is incalculable.

3 It is God who always feeds us whether birds or ships bring the food.

4 Our part in life is obedience, simple duty; God will attend to the rest.

5 God promises supplies only by the day.

6 He who opens his house to one God sends, opens to God himself.

#### Helpful Illustrations

*Need of faith for a great undertaking.* If a New York business man wanted to start a branch business in London, he would call some old and confidential clerk and send him over there. Suppose the clerk should take one of the most expensive sites in the city of London and put his name down for an immense rent, and open a big business, a man might come to him and say, "You have launched out?" "Yes," he answers, "I was sent to do it." "Are you worth much?" "No." "Have you money to fall back on?" "No." "Then how do you dare to enter upon this amazing expenditure?" "Because I have been sent by the head of our house to open this place. He told me to go ahead, and that he from New York would meet all the outlay. I have worked for him thirty years, and he has never failed me yet." Every Christian has been called to undertake great things for Christ. Behind you is your faithful God, and he cannot fail.—*Moody.*

*True religion stands the test.* A friend of the writer was asked to enter on a public discussion with some unbelievers. He replied, "When you can find me twelve families who were once Christian, but by embracing your views have become more virtuous, useful, contented, and happy, I shall think it worth while to argue with you. I can find you one hundred families who were once living only on your theory, but who, by Christianity, have become better husbands and wives, better parents and citizens, more virtuous and happy." Yes, let religion be tested by its purifying fire. "The God that answereth by fire, let him be god."—*Newman Hall.*

## Our Bible School

### STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST

*Monday:* (1) The Canaanitish Woman, Matt. 15: 21-28. (2) The Deaf Mute of the Decapolis, Mark 7: 31-37.

*Tuesday:* (1) The Second Miracle of the Loaves, Mark 8: 1-10. (2) The Signs of the Times, Matt. 16: 1-4. (3) The Leaven of the Pharisees, Matt. 16: 5-12. (4) The Blind Man of Bethsaida, Mark 8: 22-26.

*Wednesday:* (1) The Great Confession, Matt. 16: 13-20. (2) The Cross the Price of the Crown, Matt. 16: 21-28. (3) The Transfiguration, Matt. 17: 1-13.

*Thursday:* (1) The Lunatic Boy, Mark 9: 14-29. (2) The Temple Tax, Matt. 17: 24-27. (3) The Little Ones of the Kingdom, Matt. 18: 1-14.

*Friday:* (1) The Sectarian Request, Mark 9: 38-42. (2) The Spiritual Surgery, Mark 9: 43-50. (3) The Law of Discipline, Matt. 18: 15-20.

*Saturday:* (1) The Unforgiving Servant,